

Message Text

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41

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCCT-01 SY-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-01 INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6287

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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"LONDON PLS POUCH TO BELFAST"

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, EI, UK (NI)

SUBJECT: PRESS EXPECTS PROVO TRUCE

REF: DUBLIN 1815, 1790

1. DUBLIN NEWSPAPERS DECEMBER 20 EXPECT THAT PROVO IRA WILL ANNO-
UNCE CHRISTMAS TRUCE SUNDAY EVENING, DEC 22, OR ALTERNATIVELY ON
CHRISTMAS EVE. MORE IMPORTANT, PRESS ALSO SPECULATES THAT THERE
WILL BE A "SUBSTANTIAL RESPONSE" FROM BRITISH GOVERNMENT. WHILE
PROTESTANT INTERMEDIARIES ARE STILL DENYING THAT THEY ARE NEGOT-
IATING TERMS, THEY HAVE CLEARLY HAD SERIOUS DISCUSSIONS WITH BOTH
BRITISH AND PROVOS. ACCORDING TO PRESS, PROVOS EXPECT BRITISH RES-
ONDO TO TRUCE BY RELEASING A LARGE NUMBER OF INTERNEES, WITH-
DRAWING SOME SOLDIERS TO BARRACKS, AND ENDING ARRESTS AND "HARRASS-
MENT." SUCH STEPS COULD BE PRELUDE TO NEGOTIATIONS FOR PROLONG-
ING TRUCE AND HOPEFULLY TURNING IT INTO LEASTING CEASE-FIRE.

2. IF IT COMES OFF, THIS WILL BE FIRST TRUCE SINCE CHRISTMAS 1972
AND FIRST TRUCE ACCOMPANIED BY NEGOTIATIONS SINCE JUNE/JULY 1972.

2. COMMENT: A REAL SUSPENSION OF PROVO VIOLENCE WOULD, OF COURSE,
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BE VERY SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE IN NORTHERN IRELAND. WE

WISH TO REPEAT CAUTIONS GIVEN IN REFTELS, HOWEVER, THERE STILL APPEARS TO BE A VERY DEEP DIVIDE BETWEEN PROVO AND BRITISH CONDITIONS FOR LASTING CEASE-FIRE. BRITISH CONDITIONS, IN TURN, MUST DEPEND ON NEEDS OF PROTESTANT COMMUNITY AS WELL AS OF PROVOS. EVERYONE NATURALLY HOPES THAT THE PEACE EFFORT WILL WORK, BUT PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS SHOW HOW DIFFICULT IT IS TO RECONCILE CONFLICTING DEMANDS.

MOORE

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